



HMCS ARMENTIERES - Civilianized

by F.A. Clapp

After the end of the second World War, HMCS ARMENTIERES was laid up at Esquimalt until 1947 when she was put up for disposal by the War Assets Corporation. Andys Bay Industries Ltd., a subsidiary of Coastal Towing Co. Ltd. was the successful bidder. O.H. New president of both companies had ARMENTIERES converted into a tugboat and freighter renaming her A.G. GARRISH honouring a longtime employee and director of the company. During the conversion, which saw her keep her triple expansion engines, the ship was fitted with towing and cargo winches, radar echo sounder, radio telephone and in addition she was fitted with new Yarrow type water tube boilers and was converted to an oil burner. A.G. GARRISH began service on June 1, 1949 on a charter to Coastal Towing being engaged in towing log booms and barges on the West Coast of Vancouver Island.

In 1958 she was sold to Arctic Shipping Co. Ltd. of Edmonton who installed a 1200 hp. Union diesel engine which gave her an 11 knot speed. Her first voyage for her new owner began in July 1958 when she sailed from Vancouver for Spence Bay NWT. Upon her return from a 4500 mile voyage ARCTIC ROVER was chartered out to Island Tug and Barge Ltd. until May of the following year. At that time she was fitted with a higher wheelhouse to gain a greater horizon for navigating ice. On July 15 she left Vancouver, towing the new Victoria Machinery Depot built barge A.S. No. 2, for Tuktoyaktuk, Cambridge Bay and Spence Bay. ARCTIC ROVER returned to Vancouver during October 1959 and was laid up from then until January 1962. At that time she was chartered to Kingcome Navigation Co. Ltd. of Vancouver for towing their log barges from the Queen Charlotte Islands to MacMillan Bloedel's plants in the Lower Mainland. Later in the same year she was sold to Vancouver Tugboat Co. Ltd. who renamed her LA FORCE and was used in general towing until laid up in 1970.

Vancouver Tugboat Co. Ltd. sold LA FORCE to a resident of Washington State who refurbished the old ship and gave her the name POLARIS. In 1973 she sailed for South East Alaska for use as a "timber survey ship" and is believed to be still engaged in the same trade.